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ABSTRACT

This report on the work of the Library Committee of the Capitol Consortium for Continuing Higher Education, one of six regional Consortia in Virginia, focuses on cooperative projects, including a proposal for a Periodicals in Richmond Area Libraries List. The proposed list, which is judged essential for resource sharing and for continuing education library support in a 12-county area, will follow a MARC format and other recommended standards for machine compatibility. Disposition of college program funds by the committee is also discussed as a brief review of cooperative library efforts in the Richmond area over the last decade. (Author/CWM)

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The Library Committee

of the

Capitol Consortium for Continuing Higher Education

Richmond, Virginia

A Talk Presented to Librarians Attending
The 8th Biennial Institute
Collection Development Update

by

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THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE OF THE CAPITOL CONSORTIUM

FOR CONTINUING HIGHER EDUCATION

In the mid-1970's the State Council for Higher Education in its concern for continuing education at an advanced level for adults in Virginia determined that a regional arrangement of state colleges and universities for coordination of this effort would be effective and so arranged these schools into six consortia, each centered around one of the major universities. Enabling legislation passed by the Virginia General Assembly made this possible. All state academic institutions in the Richmond area belong to the Capitol Consortium for Continuing Higher Education. This consortium coordinates the educational programs offered away from the campuses of these academic institutions. For a better understanding of this, knowing some of the goals and objectives of the Capitol Consortium for Continuing Higher Education may be helpful. Here are a few:

1. To provide a means for cooperation among the member institutions engaged in higher education in the Capitol Consortium Region.
2. To provide maximum continuing education opportunities to meet the needs and requests of the citizens in the Capitol Consortium Region.
3. To encourage cooperative use of facilities and other resources of other member institutions.

This latter objective is the operative one for the libraries of the member institutions. The original members of the Library Committee were;

Virginia State College, J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College, John Tyler Community College, Southside Virginia Community College, and as the focal institution, Virginia Commonwealth University. The membership now includes all public libraries in the region. As the Director of University Libraries at Virginia Commonwealth University, I serve as Chairman of the Library Committee. Actually, I am convener, simply the person who arranges for our meetings and calls our colleagues together to discuss our concerns for further library cooperation. Shortly after the state institutions began their efforts, the staff of the State Council suggested that public libraries join us, and this idea proved to be very acceptable to the original members of the Library Committee. The Consortium serves 12 counties and several cities in Central Virginia.

Our Library Committee began its activities in 1976. The original concern was for finding ways to improve library support for continuing education and for the state institutions which are members of the Capitol Consortium Library Committee that is still the primary central interest. We are free, however, to foster area cooperation both among ourselves and others.

Interlibrary cooperation in the Richmond area is not new. There are several library cooperative efforts here that have many years of service behind them. A brief review will describe the situation. In 1971 some of the academic libraries began the Richmond Area Film Library Cooperative. This very successful effort has many other members now. Its

major activity is the sharing of educational films in 16 mm and video cassette format. Though this cooperative has been very successful, its achievements are limited, because it is concerned with only one type of cooperation.

Another is the Richmond Academic Libraries Cooperative. This five-year-old cooperative is a modern formulation based on cooperative agreements made many years ago by some of its members. Five years ago, the librarians of the senior academic institutions in Richmond decided that a more formal arrangement should be instituted. The membership includes: The Virginia State Library, Libraries of the University of Richmond, Union Theological Seminary, Randolph-Macon College, Virginia State College, Virginia Union University, and Virginia Commonwealth University. This group meets about three times a year under the convener system, which is a rotating responsibility of two years duration. Through a sub-committee system the Richmond Academic Libraries Cooperative provides a way for staff of member libraries to meet to discuss mutual interests, including government documents, serials, circulation, reference, and development of collections of non-serial material.

Directors of Richmond area public libraries are convened regularly by a coordinator from the Virginia State Library. This also is a group of long standing and it fosters cooperation among the public libraries. Cooperative efforts in the Richmond area are not centralized but another innovative arrangement compensates for this. Three of these groups; The Capitol Consortium for Continuing Higher Education Library Committee,

the Richmond Academic Libraries Cooperative, and the Directors of the public libraries, have agreed to meet together at least once a year and more often as the need arises. So there is a mechanism for collective consideration of common objectives. The plan is for the combined group to meet together to discuss mutual problems, and then break into the specific groups for discussion of problems and questions, pertaining only to that groups' interest. There is no reason why this idea should not work, and it was favorably received by all of the librarians. I will illustrate later on in my talk how this has worked.

In discussing cooperative efforts, the need for funding and resources is most important. Obviously, each member of a cooperative must and does contribute some resources, often committing a proportionate share of the cost to a cooperative effort. Some of this contribution is in the form of staff time, or supplies and material, and sometimes in cash, proportionate to a member's size, or expected return from the effort. Directly, or indirectly, some funding is contributed. Usually, this is the basis of a cooperative effort; anything beyond an effort capable of self-support requires additional help. Fortunately, help for the Richmond area has been available.

Formally organized consortia are eligible for a college library resources program grant under the terms of Title II A, of the Higher Education Act of 1965. In each year of its existence the Capitol Consortium Library Committee has applied for such a grant and has been successful.

The first grant was used to buy books and other library materials related to continuing education for use by interested staff and students of the member institutions. In the second year after receiving its grant, the library committee selected print and non-print materials for permanent deposit in the libraries of correctional facilities in the Capitol area. Several of the state institutions offer continuing education courses at these facilities. The materials included; guides for learning how to study, and other self-help items as well as books. We were told these materials are appreciated and used by the inmates of these correctional facilities.

Expenditure of this year's grant is now under consideration by the public and academic librarians of the library committee. We will probably have a decision by the end of this month. It appears that funding under Title II-A of the Higher Education Act will no longer be available after this year, and this is not to be lamented. It has had its day, and I thought you would find our use of these funds interesting. Another source of funding is the library development fund held by the State Council for Higher Education for its library advisory committee. In 1976, the Capitol Consortium Committee, as it began its work and reviewed its primary concern for library support of off-campus credit courses, realized the lack of recent experience with library support for continuing education among its members. No one on any of the member library staffs had recent experience in continuing education library support. Two of the members had experience some years ago with this service, and believed that it was unsatisfactory. The members agreed

that there was a need to learn of, and or perhaps develop, new techniques. The library committee and the consortium administrator at that time, Dr. Roland Scott, worked to draft a proposal to the library advisory committee for funding to develop a plan. This first effort failed because of a proviso forbidding employment of personnel and a failure thereby to permit the employment of a consultant. In 1977-78, a second effort was successful and funds were obtained, about $5900, to develop a plan for library support of continuing education. The final draft of our report is being typed now. With this assistance, librarians from academic and public libraries participated in several field trips to visit libraries in other states. We also spoke to other librarians over the telephone. All of these trips proved most productive. Full details of the visits are in the report. These visits included the libraries of community colleges, technical institutes, public libraries, one regional center, and a number of college and university libraries. Our first visit covered five compuses and the headquarters of the North Carolina Community College System, probably one of the finest systems in our country, and certainly in the south.

Later, several members visited New Orleans, and at the New Orleans Public Library learned of the Free University of New Orleans. This is a situation where the public library established an adult continuing education program with some federal funding, especially CETA funds, and where teachers volunteered to teach classes without pay. This is a remarkable effort and a great success. As a result of these visits it was determined that local library arrangements are best for the

support of programs offered by academic institutions. When one of our schools offers a program in an area served by a local public library, or perhaps the library of another college, then arrangements for library support are made with that library. The local library is asked to serve as the host library for materials sent to it by one of our libraries. This method has been tried in other states and found to be successful. Virginia Commonwealth University Libraries have used this arrangement on two occasions this year and both instances have proved successful.

Our second effort to obtain financial support in 1978-79, this fiscal year, is in a way an offshoot of this effort. One of the things that impressed us most during our field trips was the importance of union lists. The librarians determined to investigate the possibility of creating union lists of library materials for the Richmond area. Early in this current year, members of the library committee, who are involved in these other cooperative efforts as well, expressed the need for some effort to be made to bring all of the area library directors together. As a result of this urging, all area library directors were invited to participate in a group meeting. Last winter the directors from all three of these cooperative groups met to discuss mutual concerns. One of the results of that meeting was the decision to develop a periodicals in Richmond area libraries list. All of the academic and public librarians of this area agreed to share in this objective. A proposal for this cooperative project was drafted and again submitted to the Library Advisory Committee of the State Council. Funding was granted in the amount of $9,925 to get the project underway. Work on

this list is in progress. This periodicals list will use a MARC format and will have both on and off-line capabilities when all of the work is completed. Richmond area libraries subscribe to some 18,000 periodical titles and it is of great importance, not only to inter-library cooperation and collection development, but also to continuing education that such a list be available. We estimate now that this project will take slightly more than two years to complete. Inspired by their success, librarians of this area are discussing further projects.

The library committee of the Capitol Consortium for Continuing Higher Education can claim a place in the library cooperative effort here in the Richmond area, sometimes that of a leader, but always as a group willing to work with others for the improvement of library services to the people of this region and of Virginia.

Thank you.